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Sith Battlelords

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Adventure Spoiler Warning!

If you haven't played the high-level adventure "A Mon Alone," please don't read any further. The Sith Battlelords are an element of the plot of the event, and reading this article might spoil small portions of the event for you.

The following is an excerpt from a personal log on one of Cularin's many holonet nodes. It is unclear who the original author was, or who the slicer might have been that obtained the logfile. The contents are disturbing enough that the mainstream media is refusing to even discuss it, lest it further fuel the delusions of the Believers. All the same, the file has been making the rounds of some of the conspiracy-focused nodes, drawing no small amount of concerned reaction from many who read it.

Everyone wonders about that Sith fortress on Almas. I mean, it's not the kind of thing you can ignore, with the big black spire rising out of the desert. It's older than almost anything in Cularin, I guess. And it's a scary place. I've been there a couple of times, helping the Jedi out. It's scary in a way nothing I've ever seen is scary. It's wrong in a way I never imagined anything could be wrong.

I always wondered why anybody would build that kind of place. I mean, it's way away from everything else, it's out in the desert, it had to be terraformed just to be livable -- and I read that thing that was supposedly written by Darth Rivan about why he came to Cularin. But that doesn't explain why he'd build a fortress that shoots huge lightning at passing starships. And I'm not the kind of person who believes in the whole "mad, evil genius" mentality. You don't get to be a Sith Lord, I bet, by just doing whatever you want. Everything you do has to have a purpose. There was a reason Darth Rivan came to Cularin, and there's a reason he built that fortress where and how he did.

I think I may have figured it out. I mean, I got hold of a file. I'm not going to post it here, since it was something I horked off a Jedi's datapad. I don't want anyone tracing it back to him (or her -- I'm not telling). It laid out this scary ritual thing that would explain a lot about why we got a place like this here, and why Rivan would have wanted it to start with.

He wanted to use it to make Sith battlelords.

If you never heard of them, you aren't the only one. From what I can tell, it's not like these guys ever made it into wide circulation. If they had... well, the battles the Sith lost? They might have won.

The basic idea of Sith battlelords goes back to the problem the Sith always had that made them adopt that "rule of two" thing. Namely, if you get too many evil guys in the same place, they're gonna kill each other. Evil doesn't work well together. Darksiders can't organize, because they're always afraid everyone else is going to stab them in the back -- literally. With a lightsaber. These kind of people aren't likely to work together, and nobody's sure gonna want to work for them.

So to take care of this problem, I guess Rivan designed these battlelords. The basic idea was to eliminate insubordination as an option for soldiers and make it difficult for someone who's in charge of soldiers to mistreat them. Kind of a forced morale thing. It was a pretty convoluted process, and he needed someplace special to do all the work -- like a fortress in the middle of nowhere that he could use to test things out and refine the technique.

A battlelord, as near as I can tell, is like a commanding officer with big ugly teeth and a leash that connects him to all his soldiers. Except nobody can see the leash and the teeth. They're partly metaphorical, depending on the species of the battlelord.

This isn't making sense. Let me outline the process for you.

There's a long, drawn-out ritual. All sorts of Sith "magic" is involved, and I don't want to know exactly what happens. But at the end, the person who's supposed to become a battlelord is laid down and cut open. Then he bleeds, and while he's bleeding, his troops pass by and track through his blood. (I guess there could have been female battlelords, too. I never thought about it.) Somehow, with everything that's gone on, this bonds them to the commander. Then some more dark side badness gets done, and if the commander survives, when he stands up again, he's a battlelord and is connected to his troops.

That means they can't leave him. They can't get more than five kilometers away from him (this part was kind of vague, but what was being described made it sound like about five km), or they'll fall into this wracking pain and eventually just die. They can't take action against their battlelord, or they have the same problem. Wracking pain, followed by death. So what you've got is a bunch of troops who don't have any choice but to be loyal.

Here's the best part, though. You'd think that they'd just want to kill the battlelord, right?

They can't! If they try to kill the battlelord, and if they actually manage to hurt him -- if they manage to draw blood -- the damage doesn't affect him. Instead, it affects one of them, one of the troops who are bonded to him. As long as they're close enough for him to see them, any time he gets hurt, he can make it hurt any of his troops instead. So the troops sure aren't

going to try to kill him, and they're going to do everything in their power to keep him safe. Because for him to die, they either all have to be dead first, or they have to be nowhere around him.

That's why Rivan built the fortress. He needed a lab. A place with enough dark side energy to create these monstrosities to lead his armies.

I guess he didn't succeed, which is a good thing. Because I really wouldn't want a bunch of these battlelords running around. We have enough trouble killing the things that die when you stick a lightsaber through them. We don't need to deal with things that might not - -